

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Town of Fabius  
Onondaga County, New York**

prepared by:

**PLANNING/ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESEARCH CONSULTANTS**

310 West State Street  
Ithaca, New York 14850

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ADOPTED 9/19/05

The Town of Fabius Comprehensive Plan was developed by the Zoning Committee under the auspices of the Town Board with assistance from Planning/Environmental Research Consultants.

#### ZONING COMMITTEE

Robert DeMore, Chairman

Bill Casey	Barry Ellis
Bob West	Lorana Zirbel
Peter Whitbean	Anne Hilfinger
Vaughn Skinner	Melani Valardi Village Mayor

#### TOWN BOARD

Robert DeMore, Supervisor

James Conway	Deborah Foster
Barry Ellis	Peter Schlicht

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# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TOWN OF FABIUS ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Fabius, with an area of almost 30,000 acres is located in the southeastern corner of Onondaga County. It is bounded by the towns of Pompey and Lafayette on

the north and the town of Tully on the west. The Madison County towns of DeRuyter and Cazenovia are on the east and Cortland County towns of Cuyler and Truxton are on the south.

The largest population concentration in Fabius is located in the Village of Fabius, an area of about 255 acres north and east of the Town's geographic center and bisected by State Route 80. Smaller population centers, the hamlets of Apulia Station and Apulia, are located near the Town's western boundary.



This Comprehensive Plan represents a desire to examine current physical and social characteristics in the Town, evaluate changes that have occurred in the past and assess the potential for future change. The process used to develop a plan enables the Town to evaluate and influence future change in ways that can capitalize on existing strengths and protect those environmental qualities that residents prize.

Preparation of the plan involves several specific steps: gathering information about basic existing conditions and trends; identifying current and anticipated problems associated with random growth; evaluating plausible alternatives for future development; and establishing realistic planning goals and sensible development policy within a changing regional context.

It is important to note that the plan is, in fact, just a guide formulated at one point in time. To achieve maximum effectiveness from the planning process, the plan should be reviewed periodically. As growth patterns in the county and region evolve, and as local attitudes change or more information becomes available, the plan should be adjusted accordingly to reflect current conditions. No community can completely influence its future, of course, nor should it attempt to do so. Through effective planning, however, much can be done to shape and direct future development and change in ways that will protect that which is worth protecting and help the Town develop in an orderly, efficient and attractive manner.

## I. BACKGROUND DATA

### A. EXISTING LAND USE PATTERNS

Onondaga County Real Property records indicate that land in the Town of Fabius is used for a variety of purposes with large acreage owned by the State and County, many parcels devoted to farming or other forms of open space, numerous houses scattered along the local road system and settlement clusters with mixed land use and municipal services. A drive through the Town reveals a broad landscape of long vistas, open fields, wooded hillsides, large and moderate-sized agricultural operations, many scattered single family houses and other types of roadside development as well as several small concentrations of urban-scale development along the Town's primary road, Route 80. There is no doubt that agriculture is a dominant land use and major economic activity in this area. It is also clear that the Town appeals to a growing number of non-farm residents who choose to live in a pleasant rural setting.

The importance of farming in the southeastern corner of Onondaga County is evidenced by the existence of State-sponsored Agricultural Districts established to help preserve farmland and limit non-farm development. All of the Town of Fabius except the County's Highland Forest, extensive forest areas in the southwestern part of town, the village and hamlets are included in an agricultural district.



Agricultural District  
Source: New York State Department of Agriculture

Located near the center of Town, the Village of Fabius has developed slowly over the years as the dominant population center. Family homes and small businesses are concentrated along Main Street (Rt. 80), Pompey Street (Rt. 91) and Ridge Road. Two large school complexes are located on the south side of Main Street.

Similar development concentrations, but smaller in scale, have developed at Apulia Station and Apulia located on Route 80 on the western side of Fabius. A north-south running rail line passes through Apulia Station but has not had a major impact on development and land use in the hamlet or on the western side of town.

A golf course in Apulia Station and a ski slope on Togenberg Road are privately owned major recreation land uses. Major recreation facilities are provided in conjunction with the public school complex in and adjacent to the village. A small segment of the DeRuyter Reservoir is located in Fabius and has impacted the density of residential development along the shoreline and highway in this area. Two gravel-mining operations exist--one on the east side and one on the west. These quarries and scattered small business activities constitute the Town's industrial development.

## B. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Population Changes. Table 1 shows the population of Onondaga County, Syracuse, Fabius and several adjacent comparison towns from 1960 to 2000.

Table 1. POPULATION: Fabius and Comparison Communities-- 1960 to 2000

AREA	1960	1970	% chg	1980	% chg.	1990	% chg.	2000	% chg.	50-year change
Onondaga Co.	423,028	472,835	11.8	463,920	-1.9	468,973	1.1	458,536	-2.3	8.4%
Syracuse	216,038	197,297	-8.7	170,015	-13.8	163,860	-3.7	146,435	-0.6	-32.2%
Fabius (total)	1,565	1,607	2.7	1,811	12.7	1,760	-2.8	1,974	12.2	26.1%
Fabius (w/o V)	1,187	1,233	2.7	1,444	17.1	1,450	0.4	1,619	11.7	36.4%
Tully (total)	1,633	1,901	16.4	2,409	26.7	2,378	-1.3	2,707	13.8	65.8%
Tully (w/o V)	830	1,002	16.4	1,360	35.7	1,467	-1.3	1,785	21.7	115.1%
Pompey	3,469	4,536	30.8	4,492	-1.0	5,317	18.4	6,159	15.8	77.5%
Cuyler	753	836	11.0	846	1.2	850	0.5	1,036	21.9	37.6%
Truxton	907	955	5.3	980	3.5	1,064	7.7	1,226	15.2	35.2%
DeRuyter	1,290	1,366	13.0	1,349	-1.3	1,458	8.0	1,532	5.1	18.8%
Fabius Village	378	374	-1.1	367	-1.9	310	-15.5	355	14.5	-6.1%
Tully Village	803	899	12.0	1,049	16.7	911	-13.2	924	1.4	15.1%

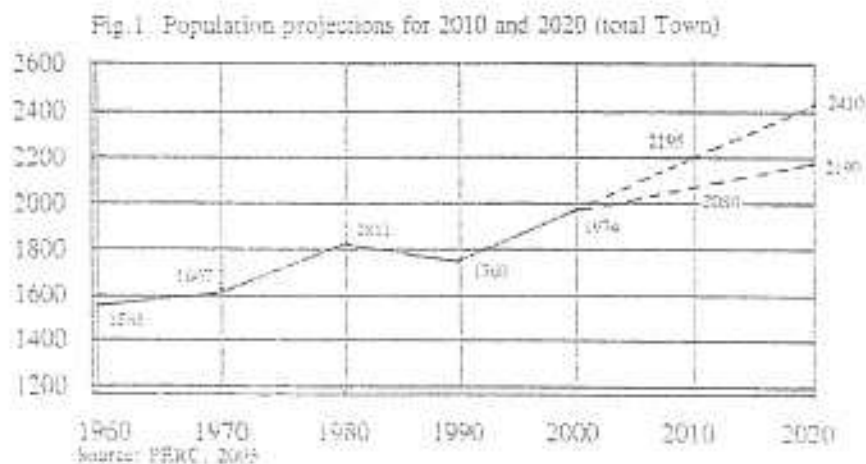
Source: US Census of Population 1960 - 2000

### Related Comments

- \* Over the 50-year review period only the City of Syracuse and the Village of Fabius had a smaller population in 2000 than in 1960. Syracuse declined dramatically by 69,603 persons (32.2%); the Village by 23 persons (6.1%).
- \* Population of the Town of Fabius (excluding the Village) increased by 432 persons (36.4) between 1960 and 2000. From 1990 to 2000 the Town's population increased by 169 (11.7%).
- \* In 1960 the Village population represented 31.8% of the total Town population. By 2000 the Village share of total Town population had dropped to 21.9%.
- \* After three decades of population decline, the Village of Fabius reversed this trend and grew by 45 persons (14.5%) between 1990 and 2000.
- \* Over the 50-year review period the Town of Tully (excluding the Village) more than doubled in population, growing by 955 (115.1%) people. The Town of Pompey grew by 2,690 (77.5%) over the 50-year period.

- \* Except for Onondaga County and Syracuse, the population numbers shown in Table 1 are relatively small. Growth or decline percentages for the Town and Village of Fabius represent small changes in the number of people living in these municipalities.

2. Population Projections. Based on statistical trends from the past 50 years, it is reasonable to expect that a moderate population growth in the rural southeastern corner of Onondaga County will continue in the future. Figure 1 below illustrates two basic population projections for the Town, including the Village, for the years 2010 and 2020. These projections are simply a straight-line graphic extension of past experience. One projection connects the 1960 population and the 2000 population and extends this line to 2020. The second projection extends the line connecting the 1990 and 2000 population figures.



#### Related Comments

- \* The longer-term projection (1960 through 2000) results in a 2020 population of approximately 2190 people, an increase of 216 (11%) over the two decades.
- \* Projecting population change based on the 12% growth from 1990 to 2000 produces a fairly robust growth scenario for 2010 and 2020. By 2020, this scenario results in a population of over 2,400 for the Town and Village.
- \* With the exception of the 1980-1990 decade where the total Town population decreased by 2.8%, there has been steady growth in Fabius, at least since 1960. Because the Village has limited land for development, it is probable that most of any new growth over the next two decades will occur outside the Village boundaries.
- \* The 2000 census shows an average household size in Fabius of 2.9 persons. Based on this figure, a hypothetical future population increase of 250 persons would translate into 86 additional households and would not greatly change the Town's character.

3. Selected Demographic Characteristics. Table 2 shows the number of households and families as well as the total population under 5 and over 64 years of age.



Table 2. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS: Fabius and Comparison Communities— 1900 - 2000

AREA	Population		% Chg	Total HH's*		% Chg	Total Family HH's		% Chg	pop under 5		pop 65+	
	1990	2000		1990	2000		1990	2000		1990	2000	1990	2000
Fabius Total	1760	1974	+12	612	686	+14	477	516	+8	180	142	177	164
w/o Village	1450	1619	+12	488	559	+15	384	423	+10	154	120	120	127
Pompey	5317	6159	+16	1827	2154	+18	1518	1761	+16	511	413	454	620
Tully	2378	2709	+14	886	1030	+16	660	745	+13	205	191	235	271
Truxton	1064	1226	+15	367	440	+20	295	338	+15	45	89	132	133
Cuyler	850	1036	+22	285	359	+26	224	270	+20	83	69	72	95
DeRuyter	1458	1532	+5	518	592	+14	405	412	+2	145	104	178	223
Fabius V.	310	355	+15	124	127	+2	93	93	0	26	22	57	37

Source: U.S. Census \*Total Households including Family and Non-family Households

#### Related Comments

- \* Family households are considered by the Census to be people living together as a family. Non-family households are individuals living alone or two or more people occupying a dwelling unit but not considered to be a family.
- \* In 2000, 73% of Village households were family households and 76% of Town households (excluding the Village) lived as families. 6 people in the Town (outside the Village) were classified as living in group quarters and not in households.
- \* The total number of households in the Town and Village increased by 74 (14%) between 1990 and 2000. Three of these households were in the Village; the rest were located elsewhere in the Town.
- \* The average size of all households in the Town (including the Village) was 2.9 persons. The average family household size was 3.4; the average non-family household size was 1.3 persons.
- \* The total population under the age of 5 decreased by 38 (21%) during the decade. Most of this decline occurred in the Town outside the Village.
- \* For the population 65 years old and older there was a decline of 7% during the decade. All of this decrease occurred in the Village. The rest of the Town experienced a slight gain in this age group.
- \* For comparison, Pompey saw a 19% drop in the under 5 population and a 37% increase in the 65 and over age group. Tully lost 7% of its under-5 population while the 65 and older age group increased by 15%.



Table 3 shows the number of housing units for the 1990 and 2000 census years. Also shown is the occupancy type of occupied units and the number and type of vacant units.

Table 3: Selected Housing Characteristics--Fabius and Comparison Communities-- 1990-2000

AREA	Total Units		Occupied Units				Vacant Units			
	1990	2000	by Owner		by Renter		Total		Sea/Rec/Occ*	
			1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Fabius Total	693	779	493	558	119	128	81	93	52	57
Fabius (w/o Vill)	561	642	394	464	94	95	73	83	48	55
Pompey	1936	2272	1651	1957	176	197	109	118	37	23
Tully	992	1139	662	765	224	265	106	109	58	62
Truxton	407	536	292	345	75	95	40	96	24	68
Cuyler	342	406	232	298	53	61	57	47	15	18
DeRuyter	811	867	396	465	122	127	293	275	228	238
Fabius Village	132	137	99	94	25	33	8	10	4	2

Source: U.S. Census \*Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use.

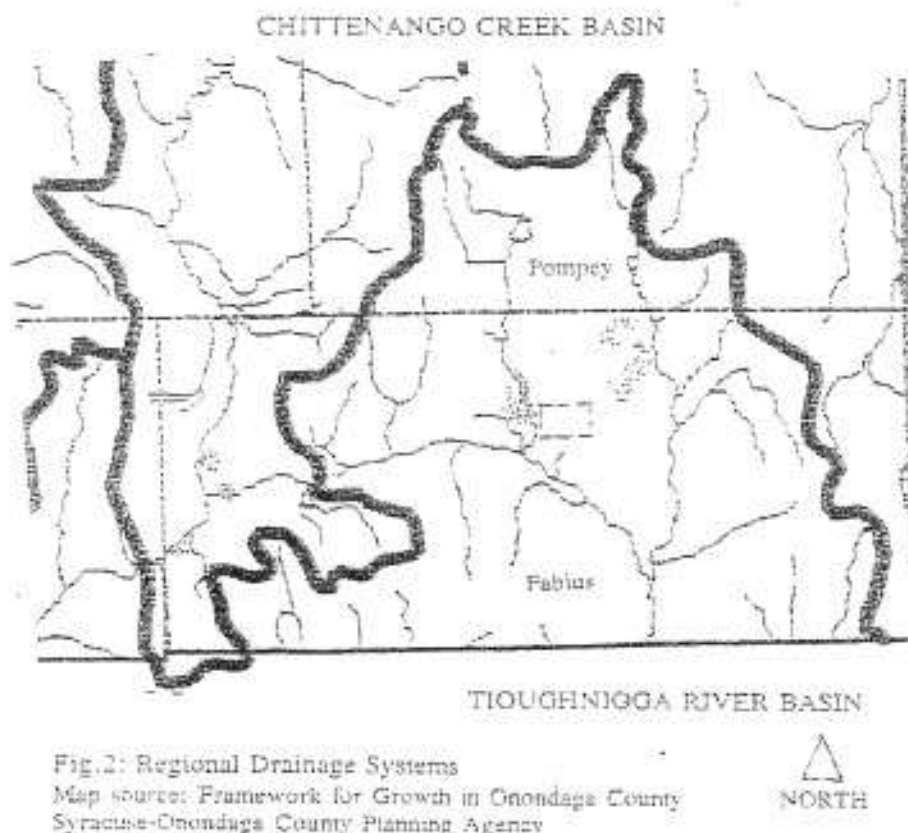
#### Related Comments

- \* The total number of housing units in the Town (779) increased by 86 (12%) between 1990 and 2000. Only 5 of these additional units were located within the Village.
- \* In 2000 the Town (excluding the Village) had 642 dwelling units, 81 (13%) more than in 1990. There were 559 occupied housing units in the Town: 464 (83%) were owner-occupied and 95 (17%) were renter-occupied. 83 (13%) were classified as vacant, 55 of which were for seasonal, recreational or occasional use.
- \* 94 (74%) of Fabius Village's 127 occupied housing units were owner-occupied; 33 (26%) were renter-occupied and 10 (7%) were classified as vacant.
- \* Only 12 of the 93 total vacant units were recorded as being for rent or sale. The rest were classified as being unoccupied or for seasonal, recreational or occasional use.
- \* In 2000 the Town (including the Village) had 558 owner-occupied housing units. While not shown on the table, census figures indicate that 443 (79%) of these homes were occupied by family households and 115 (21%) by non-family households, i.e. single or unrelated persons. Of the 128 renter-occupied units, 73 (57%) were occupied by family households and 55 (43%) by non-family households.

- \* Of comparison communities, the Town of Pompey had the largest percentage (91%) of owner-occupied housing units and the Town of Tully had the largest percentage (26%) of renter-occupied units. DeRuyter had the largest number of so-called vacant units (275 or 53%). This is explained by the large number of DeRuyter housing units (238) that were classified as being used seasonally, recreationally or occasionally.

### C. NATURAL FEATURES

1. Major Drainage Systems. Figure 2 shows regional drainage systems affecting the Town of Fabius. Headwater tributaries of the West Branch of the Tioughnioga River affect much of the central part of town. Two tributaries of the Chittenango Creek Basin are also located in Fabius: Butternut Creek originates just south of Apulia Station and Limestone Creek flows out of the DeRuyter Reservoir.



#### Related Comments:

- \* Onondaga County contains seven major watersheds. All flow to the north except the Tioughnioga River Basin which flows south to the Susquehanna River.

- \* In the Tioughnioga basin, surface water flowing south through valleys scoured out by glacial action has deposited layers of generally well-drained, easily excavated sand and gravel which are considered highly valuable land resources.
  - \* Small areas of the stream valleys, frequently the head areas, have poor or no drainage and a high water table throughout the year. Most of these areas have been designated by the State as wetlands and have restrictions on their use. (See map of wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes).
2. Geology: Water Resources. In the rural areas of Onondaga County there are few public water supply systems; most of the water needs are provided by groundwater supplies, the quantity and quality of which vary greatly.

Glacial movement through this part on New York State produced deposits of deep, generally well-drained, gravelly soils in river valleys created by the vast sheets of melting ice. These are the narrow, nearly level to undulating areas that bisect the Town in a generally east-west direction and extend to the south in the Tioughnioga River valley and to the north along Fabius Brook. Figure 3a illustrates generally the areas where gravel deposits are found; Map 2 shows the soil types in these areas. Aquifers beneath such areas are good sources of groundwater as shown in Figure 3b.

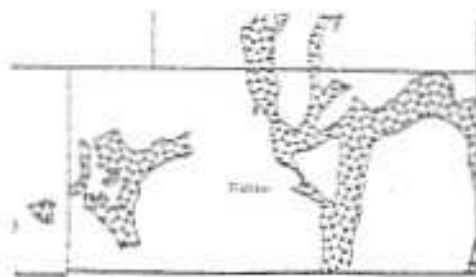


Fig. 3a. Sand and gravel deposits

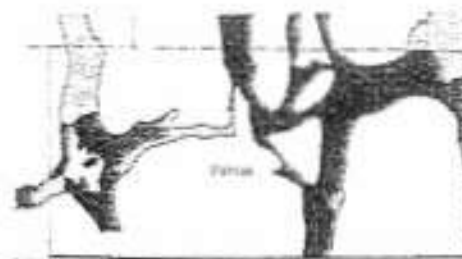


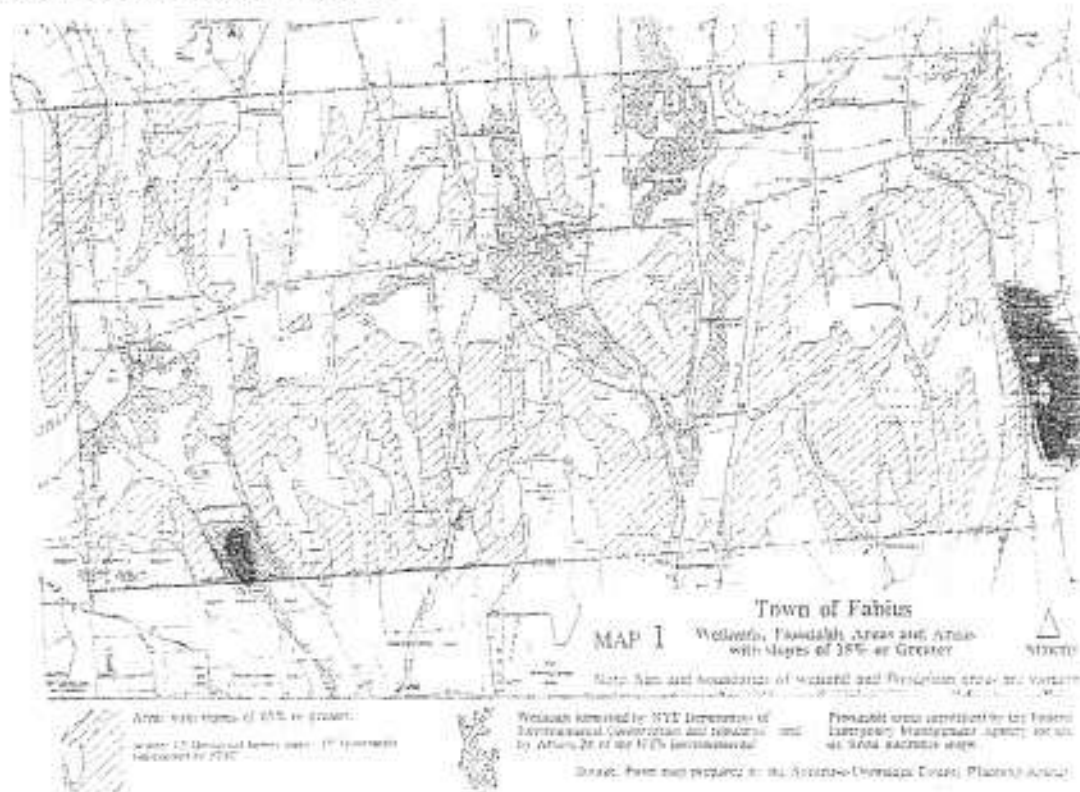
Fig. 3b. Sanding trends for groundwater

Source: Onondaga County Zoning Development Board, Fabius-Onondaga County Planning Agency

#### Related Comments

- \* Most glacially created valley areas in Fabius consist of deep, gravelly geologic deposits of glacial outwash under gravelly Palmyra, Howard and related deep, generally well-drained undulating soils over gravel and sand. These areas are well suited for agriculture. Gravelly areas that are also well drained and have ample groundwater resources available are also highly attractive locations for housing and most other types non-farm development.
- \* Good groundwater yields are obtained from gravelly aquifers below the Palmyra and Hudson soils. Studies indicate that yields of up to 1,000 gallons a minute should be possible in some locations. (Cornell Misc. Bulletin 80, Olson, Whitney, Marshall)

- \* Because gravelly soils are also highly permeable there is always the potential for pollution of underlying aquifers through improper farming practices and excessive development. Even so, preservation of high agricultural productivity is most appropriate and non-farm development should be limited and concentrated if possible.
3. Slopes, Wetlands and Floodplains. Fabius and southern Onondaga County are part of the physiographic region known as the Allegheny Plateau. The advance and decline of glaciers over the plateau--the last of which occurred about 10,000 years ago--scoured the earth's surface and deposited material that produced the hills and valleys that are present today. The map below illustrates general areas in Fabius where steeper slopes and extensive wetlands are found.



#### Related Comments

- \* Not all areas of Palmyra and Howard soils are well drained. In some locations, wet conditions limit development and land use. Some of the poorly drained areas have been officially designated by New York State as protected and restricted wetlands. These areas can be used for agriculture but other uses are limited.
- \* Most of the areas of steep slopes are located on heavily forested land in the lower third of the town. Excessive slope, shallowness to bedrock in many locations, poor drainage and limited groundwater restricts the use potential for steep areas. Recreation and reforestation are effective uses in these areas.

4. Soil Associations. A bulletin published by the Cornell University College of Agriculture (Dept. of Crop and Soil Science)<sup>1</sup> examines soils and their use in the five-county area surrounding the City of Syracuse. Identification and mapping in terms of soil associations is used to facilitate a broad analysis of larger areas that typically contain two or more different soils that are side by side in a single area or farm. The various soil associations are comprised of the names of the dominant soil series of the area. Generalized boundaries of each association in the Town of Fabius are shown on Map 2. Each association is briefly described below.

- a. Lordstown-Volusia-Mardin. Most of the hilly southern part of Fabius is in the LVM association and consists of public land including state reforestation areas and the County's Highland Forest. Dominant soil characteristics are complex consisting of shallow to moderately deep, well to somewhat poorly drained, medium and fine texture, nearly level to steep slopes over shale bedrock. According to the Cornell bulletin these areas can be used intensively for recreation, forestry, wildlife and open space. They are less suitable for farming. Slow permeability, shallowness to bedrock, wetness and excessive slopes are characteristics in many areas that can also limit the use of septic tanks and filter fields.
- b. Schoharie-Odessa. This association is concentrated in the valley north of Apulia Station between the railroad and Clark Hollow Road. The SO soils are classified as moderately well to poorly drained, medium and fine textured, nearly level to gently sloping soils free of stones and gravel. The Cornell report finds that more productive farming on SO soils can result when they are located adjacent to better soils such as those found in the Lansing-Conessus association to the east. Seasonal wetness, slow permeability and poor groundwater supply also affect the suitability of these soils for home sites.
- c. Lansing-Conessus. This association consists of deep, well to moderately well drained, medium textured, gently to moderately sloping soils on glacial till. LC soils are fertile and respond well to farm management practices. Groundwater is limited, however, and this tends to reduce agricultural productivity unless irrigation is provided. Slow permeability below 30 inches and groundwater availability are conditions that affect non-farm development in LC areas.
- d. Palmyra-Howard. The Palmyra and Howard association occupies deep, well drained, medium and coarse textured, nearly level to undulating soils over gravel and sand. These areas are considered to be highly valuable for food production. Palmyra soils occupy elongated valleys extending along Routes 80 and 91 through the Town and extending northward. Howard soils extend southward along the narrow valley of the West Branch of the Tioughnioga River. In most locations these

<sup>1</sup> Soils and Their Use in the Five-County Area Around Syracuse. Cornell Miscellaneous Bulletin 80 by Gerald W. Olson, John E. Whitty and Raymond L. Marshall, undated.



soils can be used intensively for agricultural purposes. They are also well suited for housing and most other non-farm uses. The underlying aquifers are highly productive with high yield potential in most areas. The greatest danger is related to seepage of improperly filtered water--from septic systems or agricultural practices--into groundwater aquifers. Some of the P areas are gravelly or silty and wet. These areas have been identified as wetlands northeast and northwest of the Village of Fabius as well as in the valley between Togenburg and Vincent Corners Roads. Other areas of wet Palmyra soils are located south of Apulia Station. With properly designed drainage fields, Palmyra and Howard soils are also good locations for non-farm development.

- e. Langford-Erie. Langford-Erie describes an association of soils that are moderately sloping and generally slowly permeable. Agricultural use of these areas varies from high to low intensity. In some areas a dense layer (fragipan) 15 to 20 inches below the surface impedes internal drainage and promotes seasonal wetness. Two areas of Langford-Erie soils are found in Fabius: one north of the Village and another straddling the northern end of Waters Road. Very slow permeability and seasonal wetness produce severe restrictions for housing and other forms of non-farm development.
- f. Honeo-Lima. This association is the largest in the Syracuse area but only a very small amount is found in the Town of Fabius, just east of Pompey Center Road. These are deep, well to moderately-well drained soils. Although there are shortages of groundwater in some locations, soils of the HL association are fertile and generally support intensive agricultural activity. These soils are slowly to moderately permeable for septic tank effluent.
- g. Cazenovia-Ovid. This association is characterized by deep, well to moderately well drained, sloping soils on glacial till. A small area of CO soils, including steep slopes adjacent to The Gulf north of DeRuyter Reservoir, is located in the northeast corner of Fabius. While there are some drainage problems, these are considered to be among the most fertile agricultural soils of the area. Because these soils have slowly permeable sub soils and high water tables in some places, septic tank failures are a concern of residential development.
- h. Muck-Peat. These are areas of wet, organic soils located on flat land at the head waters of the Tioughnioga River. The organic materials that make up the Muck and Peat soils are derived mostly from sedges, moss, reeds, cattails, rushes and woody vegetation. Where they are not drained, these areas usually have a high water table throughout the year. MP areas are generally recognized as being best for agriculture or are often left undeveloped. Much of the MP area in Fabius has been identified as a state-designated wetland. Although agriculture is permitted in such areas, most other land uses are not. In its wetland regulations, intended to preserve such areas, the State has established criteria and standards for development.





**Town of Fabius**  
**MAP 2 Soil Associations: Generalized Areas**

Source: Cornell Miscellaneous Bulletin 80  
 NYS College of Agriculture

## D. COMMUNITY VALUES SURVEY

In October 2000 the Town of Fabius planning committee prepared a survey to assess the opinions and values of Town residents. The survey was undertaken to obtain important citizen input and as a preliminary step in the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for growth and change in Fabius for the next 10 to 20 years.

553 surveys were mailed to Fabius Resident Box Holders. 155 surveys (28%) were returned. Findings of survey tabulations are shown in the tables below.

VALUE:	Agree or Strongly Agree	% of total	Disagree or strongly disagree	% of total	Undecided or No Answer	% of total
<b>Community Atmosphere</b>						
1. Fabius is a good place to live	152	98%	0	0	3	2%
2. The rural setting is an asset	152	98%	2	1%	1	1%
3. Fabius is a safe place to live	150	97%	0	0	5	3%
4. Historic architecture should be saved	142	92%	3	2%	10	6%
5. Small-town atmosphere is a strength	139	90%	6	4%	10	6%
<b>Growth and Development</b>						
1. Protect environmental quality	147	95%	1	1%	7	5%
2. Protect water supply	146	94%	2	1%	7	5%
3. Encourage farm-land preservation	131	85%	6	4%	16	10%
4. Control rate of development	125	81%	16	10%	14	9%
5. Maintain and improve open space	116	75%	13	8%	26	17%
6. Restore historical structures	113	73%	10	6%	32	21%
7. Regulate storage of unlicensed vehicles	109	70%	26	17%	20	13%
8. Encourage home business	101	65%	24	15%	30	19%
9. Support residential construction	100	65%	26	17%	29	19%
10. Improve local roads	95	61%	38	25%	22	14%
11. Develop a community center	89	57%	37	17%	39	25%
12. Try to expand tax base	73	47%	47	30%	35	23%
13. Provide employment opportunities	69	45%	48	31%	38	25%

VALUE:	Agree or Strongly Agree	% of total	Disagree or strongly disagree	% of total	Undecided or No Answer	% of total
14. Improve water supply, generally	65	42%	33	21%	57	37%
15. Encourage industrial development	53	34%	79	51%	23	15%
16. Provide public water in Fabius Village	52	34%	51	33%	52	34%
17. Provide public water in Apulia and Apulia Station	37	24%	53	34%	65	42%
<b>Community Service: Fabius has adequate</b>						
1. Fire protection	141	91%	32	21%	12	8%
2. Schools	141	91%	1	1%	13	8%
3. Postal Service	118	76%	8	5%	9	6%
4. Parks	116	75%	25	16%	14	9%
5. Recreation opportunities	106	68%	32	21%	17	11%
6. Ambulance service	102	66%	21	14%	32	21%
7. Medical Care	89	57%	32	21%	34	22%
8. Land use regulations	83	54%	26	17%	46	30%
9. Enforcement of current regulations	77	50%	35	23%	43	28%
10. Infrastructure (water, sewers, etc.)	50	32%	59	38%	46	30%
<b>Housing needs</b>						
1. More senior citizen housing	85	55%	38	25%	32	21%
2. More new home construction	66	43%	61	39%	28	18%
3. More affordable housing	48	30%	75	47%	36	23%
4. More apartment complexes	33	21%	102	66%	20	13%
5. Mobile home parks	15	10%	123	79%	17	11%
<b>Recreation</b>						
1. Fund recreation with grants	112	72%	19	12%	24	15%
2. Develop programs for adults	72	46%	43	28%	40	26%

VALUE:	Agree or Strongly Agree	% of total	Disagree or strongly disagree	% of total	Undecided or No Answer	% of total
3. Need snowmobile and hiking trails	68	44%	63	41%	24	15%
4. Should develop swimming facilities	67	43%	61	39%	27%	17%
5. Should develop ice skating facilities	65	42%	62	40%	28%	18%
6. Need more nature/walking trails	61	39%	76	49%	18	12%
7. Should develop land for recreation use	56	36%	69	45%	30	19%
8. Fund recreation with tax dollars	36	23%	79	51%	40	26%
9. Need more playgrounds	16	10%	109	70%	30	19%

Also included in the survey was the important question of what activities or businesses respondents would like to see in Fabius if such activities or businesses were economically feasible. Responses to this question are presented below.

What would you like to see in Fabius?	Yes	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	Undecided or No Answer	Per-cent
1. Public use of school library & computers	114	74%	19	12%	12	8%
2. A family restaurant	111	72%	31	20%	13	8%
3. A gas station	102	66%	45	29%	8	5%
4. Medical office	102	66%	39	25%	14	9%
5. Grocery store	95	61%	18	12%	18	12%
6. Convenience store	89	57%	53	34%	13	8%
7. Community center	88	57%	47	30%	20	13%
8. Automotive repair	74	48%	60	39%	21	14%
9. Bakery	74	48%	66	31%	15	10%
10. Public library	68	44%	71	46%	16	10%
11. Bank	63	41%	79	51%	13	8%
12. Drug store	59	38%	77	50%	19	12%
13. Office or business park	55	35%	84	54%	16	10%
14. Manufacturing/Industry	45	29%	95	61%	15	10%
15. Fast food restaurant	22	14%	118	76%	15	10%
16. Movie theater	16	10%	124	80%	15	10%

Profile of Questionnaire respondents. A 28% response rate for a this type of mailed questionnaire is considered to be an excellent and meaningful response. The 155 respondents had the following characteristics:

- \* 46% had lived in the Town for more than 25 years. 14% had lived here for 5 years or less.
- \* 58% of respondents were 50 years old or older. Only one respondent was less than 30 years of age.
- \* One respondent lived in an apartment. 149 respondents lived in a detached home, including 1 trailer. 6 did not respond to this question.
- \* 94% of respondents said they lived in a single-family home.

### III. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE

#### A. 2010 DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR ONONDAGA COUNTY

As part of Onondaga County, the Town and Village of Fabius will necessarily be affected by long range planning and development policy of the County. The 2010 Development Guide, adopted by the county legislature in 1998, contains a number of development considerations related to rural settings, including the following:

1. The primary issue is to insure that any residential development in rural areas is sustainable, i.e. will not require costly remedial actions by government to solve private drinking water and waste water disposal problems.
2. Most rural areas of the County should remain without public water (for the foreseeable) future because of the high cost of providing water to rural areas. The scattered residential development that does occur in these areas should rely on groundwater resources.
3. Rural towns should require developers to furnish site-specific hydrogeological data to prove that a suitable groundwater supply is available to sustain any proposed development.
4. Minimum lot sizes of 1.5 to 2 acres are generally necessary given the wide distribution of poor and marginal soils for waste water disposal. Variable minimum lot sizes based on site-specific soil, slope and groundwater attributes may be a reasonable alternative where sufficient environmental data and administrative expertise is available.
5. Sustainability is impacted by the overall density and the cumulative effects of development in rural areas. Too many scattered residences in rural areas can impact the ability of farmers to maintain their operations.
6. Rural towns should insure that industrial, commercial and municipal land uses in rural areas are located, designed and monitored to protect groundwater.
7. Rural towns need to insist on the proper location of development. Avoidance of areas with unsuitable soils, high water table, shallow depth to bedrock or steep slopes can enhance sustainability of development.
8. Rural municipalities should consider sustainable residential options for elderly residents. Housing in or near villages or hamlets that offer a range of shopping, services and social contacts within walking distance will offer an alternative for rural residents as they age.



9. Continued implementation (by the County Legislature) of the purchase of development rights can help preserve and reduce development pressures on prime farmland.
10. All County agencies authorized to issue permits or approvals relating to development will take natural site limitations, such as steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock, shallow depth to water table and poorly suited soils, into consideration in issuing permits.
11. The 2010 Development Guide endorses the use of agricultural districts as a means of assisting farmers to remain in business.
12. Municipalities should review agricultural district boundaries, zoning district boundaries and text, and utility district boundaries to ensure that conflicting policies are not in effect.
13. Municipalities should limit development in environmentally sensitive areas by identifying and mapping areas which are comprised of unsuitable soils, high water tables, shallow depth to bedrock and steep slopes and making use of the information in preparing land use plans and zoning regulations.

## **B. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

In rural areas where change is gradual and the principal economic activity for many generations has been agriculture, the detailed use to which a particular parcel of land might be put in the future is largely unpredictable. The most logical approach to planning for the future is to consider a range of plausible alternatives and decide which best satisfies current needs and protects current values. The assumptions below are listed in an attempt to limit the number of variables that can affect the way land in Fabius might be used in the future.

- \* For the foreseeable future, the predominant land use in Fabius will continue to be some form of production agriculture or agriculture-related activities.
- \* For the next twenty years, population growth and related non-farm residential development will be moderate and will not significantly affect the Town's agricultural base or rural, open character.
- \* A limited range of nonagricultural development activity will continue to be a factor in future use of land in the Town but will have a secondary role in the local economy and land use pattern.
- \* The Village and hamlet centers will slowly expand as moderately dense concentrations of housing and mixed commercial/industrial land uses.

- \* Future small-scale private water supply and sewage disposal systems are not beyond consideration in appropriate locations but the need for more extensive public water and/or sewer facilities will not become a priority for at least the next ten to fifteen years.
- \* Improvement or expansion of the State and County road system will not be extensive and will not become a growth-inducing factor in Fabius.
- \* Total acreage included in the NY State-approved Agricultural Districts in Fabius will remain essentially unchanged for the foreseeable future.
- \* The railroad's impact on future development in the Town will be limited.
- \* The size and scope of farming operations in Fabius will continue to evolve and lower-productivity farms could be discontinued.
- \* Existing and emerging regulations and programs will effectively deal with environmental concerns related to farming operations.

### C. POLICY: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To provide a solid basis for the Fabius Comprehensive Plan and, more importantly, for any regulations and standards that might be incorporated in the zoning ordinance, it is important and helpful to establish some specific guidelines for future development. Such development guidelines are known as planning policy; they are direct statements about the Town's position on important development issues. These policy statements represent current community value judgments about what is important for Fabius now and in the foreseeable future.

When officially established through adoption of the plan, policy provides a rationale for public and private capital investment. Policy also provides strong direction and justification for many decisions related to future modification, administration and enforcement of development ordinances and regulations.

Community development and change can, of course, take various directions and assume various forms. Based on an extensive survey of Town residents conducted in the summer of 2000 (see Sec. II.D), a number of fundamental issues of interest and concern have been identified and evaluated by the Town Zoning Committee.<sup>2</sup> As presented below, these issues constitute the underlying policy upon which are based recommendations of the Fabius Comprehensive Plan. As local conditions and attitudes change over time it is anticipated that corresponding changes in development policy might also be necessary.

<sup>2</sup> An *Ad Hoc* Committee created to prepare recommendations for a comprehensive plan and a zoning ordinance revision. Not to be confused with other boards in the Town.

1. **GROWTH.** Based on actual performance over the past several decades, growth in the Town of Fabius is expected to be steady but moderate over the next 10 to 20 years. The community survey strongly values the rural setting and this is supported by the Committee. It is, therefore, the Town's policy to encourage and support future growth in ways that will preserve fundamental values of a rural agricultural community: low density, primarily single-family residential development.

**Goal:** A reasoned approach to future growth that reflects the importance of maintaining a strong agricultural economy while acknowledging the importance of a population base large and diverse enough to support the Town's active social and cultural environment.

**Goal:** A plan that can accommodate moderate levels of growth without diminishing the Town's agricultural base and rural character.

**Objectives:**

- a. To strike an effective balance between preserving rural, open qualities of a farming community and expanding the Town's tax base through new development.
  - b. To encourage additional residential development located in and adjacent to existing concentrations in the Village and hamlets.
  - c. To discourage, when possible, excessive strip development along major roads, especially in the stream valleys.
  - d. To establish land development controls and standards that will reflect and be consistent with the recognized historical values represented by Main Street in the Village of Fabius and similar areas in the Town.
2. **AGRICULTURE.** Agriculture is the dominant economic activity and major land use in the Town of Fabius and is a critical component of the Town's future. It is the Town's policy to continue to support measures that will protect viable farmland, encourage effective farming practices, prevent unreasonable non-farm encroachment and safeguard the environment.

**Goal:** Practices and procedures designed or supported by individual farm owners to benefit farm operation, protect viable farm land and conserve natural resources.

**Goal:** Reasonable diversity in agricultural activity that includes a variety of compatible farm business and related land uses.

**Objectives:**

- a. To support or enact measures as necessary to protect the viability of family farming operations and minimize undue criticism and pressure from non-farm development.

- b. To retain and strengthen when possible the economic viability of agriculture in Fabius.
  - c. To develop land use provisions that will support but regulate a variety of compatible agricultural and agricultural related businesses.
3. **HOUSING** The 2000 Census shows that almost 91 percent of the occupied housing units in Fabius are owner-occupied; 9 percent are rental units. Concentrations of housing are found in and around the Village and hamlets with the balance being scattered in strip fashion along most of the existing roadways. It is Town policy to encourage current concentrated residential development patterns and to reduce, when possible, pressures for future strip development along rural roadways. Alternative housing facilities for those with special needs will be supported.

Goal Additional single family housing in and adjacent to existing neighborhood concentrations.

Goal Suitable housing facilities for older residents and those with special needs in locations where adequate water and other residential services and amenities are available or could be reasonably provided.

Objectives:

- a. To encourage future housing development located adjacent to existing concentrations in the Village and hamlets.
  - b. To explore techniques and opportunities for creating adequate water supplies needed by existing neighborhoods and to facilitate housing development projects for an aging population.
  - c. To enact suitable regulations that would permit small concentrations of housing when adequate infrastructure and other support services can be obtained.
  - d. To examine techniques such as density, lot size and clustering that could reduce the negative impact of strip residential development along more heavily traveled roads.
4. **RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES** Fabius offers a variety of significant recreation and environmental features including Highland Forest, Labrador Hollow State Unique Area with Labrador Pond, Shackam Brook Reforestation Area, Fabius Reforestation Area and Heiburg Memorial Forest in the Town and a unique swimming facility in the adjacent Town of Deruyter Reservoir. In addition, there are numerous creeks and brooks, large wetland areas, steep hillsides, a privately owned ski area and golf course and the more typical recreation opportunities provided by local schools. These environmental features and

recreation facilities add greatly to the quality of life in Fabius. It is the Town's policy to preserve and protect existing resources as necessary and to capitalize on future opportunities that would further enhance the value of living and working in Fabius.

Goal Public policies and actions that reflect the value of important natural resources and contribute to the preservation of unique or environmentally sensitive areas.

Goal Expansion of an already effectively integrated and coordinated recreation program including County, Town, School District and private sector facilities.

Goal Broad community awareness of historic, environmental, social and economic interdependency and the potentially negative consequences of unplanned growth and change.

Objectives:

- a. To fully capitalize on existing opportunities to provide a variety of recreation opportunities for local residents.
- b. To encourage and support agricultural and other private-sector efforts to minimize negative environmental impacts on drainage ways, aquifers, wooded areas, steep slopes, wetlands and similar sensitive natural features.
- c. To take advantage of any future unique situations that could further enhance the Town's recreational opportunities or preserve additional natural resources.

5. **TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS** Most roads in Fabius carry relatively low volumes of traffic and it is unlikely that any new roads will be constructed in the foreseeable future. Some of the major traffic-carriers such as State Rts. 80, 91 and County 12 have cross sections that are inadequate in some locations to safely carry heavy volumes of high-speed traffic along with other modes of transportation such as bicycles. It is the Town's policy to provide a high level of maintenance on frequently used local roads and to strongly encourage and support efforts to upgrade or rebuild sections of State and County highways that are currently below standard.

Goal A Town highway system that provides adequate service to adjacent land and safe movement of local traffic throughout the town.

Goal Improved safety whenever possible on major roadways owned and maintained by the State or County.

Objectives:

- a. To establish a functional classification of roads (major, secondary, local) based on the needs of both through and local traffic.
  - b. To explore incentives and design alternatives aimed at reducing strip development and minimizing the number of driveway cuts and other potential conflicts on important traffic carriers and on roads located in environmentally sensitive areas.
  - c. To provide for the logical extension of local roads as development occurs in and adjacent to the Village and hamlets.
6. UTILITIES AND SERVICES. Ground water from private wells is the source of drinking water in Fabius and will likely remain so for most of the area for the foreseeable future. Areas of concentrated development, particularly the Village, could benefit from some form of public or quasi-public water supply system; their location over sand and gravel deposits indicates that such a system might be possible. It is the Town's general policy to preserve and protect, to the extent possible, ground water quantity (potential for overuse) and quality (potential for contamination). The feasibility of providing some form of communal water systems for areas of concentrated development will be considered when opportunities for the establishment of such facilities arise.

Sewage disposal throughout Fabius depends upon on-site wastewater systems and this is not expected to change. It is Town policy to minimize potential septic tank failure by controlling density of development and supporting County health department regulations for installation and operation of private sewage disposal systems.

Goal A level of development in Fabius that can be sustained and adequately served by existing ground water resources.

Goal Establishment of some form of quasi-public water supply service when the feasibility of such a system can be demonstrated.

Goal Establishment of some form of solid waste disposal district by unilateral action or by working cooperatively with other municipalities.

Objectives:

- a. To preserve existing ground and surface water supplies by adjusting future growth to the availability of this finite water source.
- b. To consider the feasibility of a communal water system in areas where population concentrations already exist or would be appropriate.



- c. To minimize contamination of ground and surface water resources by enlisting farm owners' support of "best management practices" and supporting county requirements for installation and maintenance of private septic systems.
  - d. To provide Fabius residents with a more effective and efficient method of disposing of household and business solid waste.
7. **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**. Historically, development in Fabius has been primarily focused on agriculture and detached housing with a limited amount of other types of land use. Continuation of this type, character and scale of development is desirable. In addition, some businesses and industries could be appropriate if such development was compatible with the rural character and single-family domestic scale that typifies existing development. As change and new growth occurs, it is the Town's policy to support additional business and industrial development that can provide services and employment opportunities for local residents and is visually and environmentally compatible with existing development.

Goal New or expanded retail development that will satisfy some of the personal service and daily shopping needs of Town residents and does not need a regional population base for survival.

Goal New or expanded development of light industry and agri-based businesses that are compatible with existing development and can provide opportunities for local employment as well as a broadened tax base.

Objectives:

- a. To encourage nonresidential development that will generally reflect the scale and character of a rural, agricultural community.
  - b. To provide land use regulations that will support additional small convenience and personal-service businesses.
  - c. To acknowledge and support the increasing importance and value of in-home businesses.
8. **LAND USE REGULATIONS** The value of appropriate regulations to guide future land use and achieve development objectives is acknowledged. To achieve maximum effectiveness, regulations should be review periodically and revised as necessary to reflect current Town values and attitudes. As development occurs it will continue to be Town policy to apply appropriate land use regulations and to review and modify such regulations when this becomes necessary.
- Goal Adoption and implementations of land use regulations that can be used to implement objectives of the Fabius Comprehensive Plan.

Objectives:

- a. To prepare and adopt land use regulations that will be current and applicable to the Town's development objectives.
- b. To review and modify land use regulations as necessary to reflect current attitudes and development objectives of the Town.

**D. GENERALIZED LAND USE DESIGNATIONS - 2020**

As illustrated on Map 3, Generalized Land Use, the Comprehensive Plan proposes that the Town be divided into six identifiable land use character areas. Each character area has distinguishing characteristics and land use patterns that either exist at present and are to be enhanced or preserved, or are desirable and could be achieved as change occurs in the future. Because future change in Fabius is expected to be slow, the generalized future land uses are, to a large extent, a reflection of present conditions.

A description of each character area follows. Desired characteristics of the natural and built environment are discussed and specific planning concerns related to future change and development are identified. Zoning and other land use and development regulations can be tailored to address many of these planning concerns with appropriate provisions.

**1. Agriculture**

The predominant land use in the Town is, and will continue to be agriculture in its diverse forms and components. All agricultural land in the Town is not equally productive or efficient to farm. In addition to overall management practices, productivity relates to soil types, fertility, and environmental factors such as slopes, groundwater supply, wetness, erosion and depth to bedrock. Some farms are highly productive and some are marginal operations.

For purposes of the Comprehensive Plan those areas that appear to be most able to successfully support intensive agricultural production in the future have been identified. These are areas of highly productive land that is generally free of most environmental constraints and has good-to-excellent groundwater supplies in gravelly aquifers. Such areas are considered to be among the most valuable farmland resources in Fabius and Onondaga County. As such they would also be suitable for a variety of agricultural-related business. These areas, especially roadside sites, are also attractive and offer few constraints for low density non-farm dwellings and many types of small commercial or service businesses.

Planning concerns in Agricultural areas relate to avoiding when possible circumstances that could adversely affect the future of farming as the principal land use activity. This could happen if non-farm development--especially residents of non-farm homes--objected to the normal or specialized activities that successful farming often requires.

Much of the most productive farm land is adjacent to the Town's primary road system. Continued farming of these fields would have little impact on the road's ability to carry traffic. Excessive non-farm development, however, can be expected to affect the traffic-carrying function of these highways. Other planning concerns involve the potential impact of farming activities on the environment. Fabius is at the head of two watersheds and the need to prevent pollution of streams, wetlands and drinking water sources is critical.

## **2. Rural Open Space**

This land use category identifies broad areas that are generally affected by a variety of factors including moderately-steep to steep valley sides, limited groundwater yields for irrigation, slowly permeable fragipans that restrict root growth, and shallowness to bedrock in some locations. Soil is often slowly permeable and bedrock is often encountered near the surface; steepness of valley sides is also a factor in some locations.

These environmental conditions affect the efficient use of land and substantially limit the agricultural potential of these soils when compared to so-called agricultural areas described above. Nonetheless, much of this land can be, and is, used for field crops and some areas are suited for woodlands and forestry, grazing, recreation and open space. Where there is road access, these areas are also suitable for some types of agricultural-related business and low-density non-farm residential development when adequate water is available.

Planning concerns in Rural Open Space areas relate to maintaining agricultural productivity in those fields that are currently being successfully farmed and promoting suitable non-farm uses of land that has limited agricultural potential. Maintaining the rural open character that these areas contribute to Fabius is also an important consideration.

## **3. Protected Open Space**

Much of the land in the southern part of the Town has been acquired by New York State, Onondaga County or private interests. These steep, heavily wooded areas have been acquired for natural resource preservation or recreation purposes and will most probably not be subject to future development pressures. They provide important open space for Onondaga and Cortland Counties, as well as the Town of Fabius, and can be expected to remain largely in their current state as wilderness, reforestation and recreation areas.

Occasionally these Protected Open Space areas are expanded by additional land acquisition. While public land is tax exempt, and additions to the public holdings do not contribute to the Fabius tax base, these open space areas suggest no significant long-range concerns related to comprehensive planning.

#### 4. Conservation Areas/Natural Resources

These areas contain concentrations of environmentally important wetlands and flood plains. Headwaters of the Tioughnioga River and Chittenango Creek converge in Fabius and the flat stream valleys of Butternut Creek, Fabius Brook and the Tioughnioga's West Branch contain important wetlands that help to reduce flooding, control erosion and provide important wildlife habitat. These naturally flat, poorly drained, areas become floodwater retention basins during periods of heavy rain; they also help to maintain surface and ground water quantity and quality.

In New York, the Department of Environmental Conservation has mapped approximate boundaries of all freshwater wetlands of 12.4 acres or more. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has also identified and mapped areas that are subject to inundation by a flood that has a 1-percent, or greater, chance of occurring during any given year (referred to as a 100-year flood). These mapped wetlands and flood plains are included in the Conservation/Natural Resources areas of the Comprehensive Plan map.

Planning concerns for Conservation Areas/Natural Resources relate to the need to protect the natural environmental functions of wetlands and flood plains. Encroachment on or reduction of, and pollution of, conservation areas and flood plains is a basic environmental concern. State law requires that a permit be obtained for any type of construction, dredging, filling, draining or other action that could modify a mapped wetland or floodplain area. Although a potential source of pollution, most farming operations are excluded from DEC-regulated activities and would be permitted unless otherwise regulated. Low density housing and other forms of non-arm development could be appropriate in some locations outside the mapped resource areas with the potential impact on the natural resource being the controlling factor.

#### 5. Recreation/Education

This land use category is narrowly defined and includes land and facilities used for public and private recreational purposes (the golf course and ski area) and by the Fabius school system. Land area occupied by these uses is relatively limited but their importance in the Town is well established. The possibility of future expansion of any existing facility is a realistic expectation. It is also possible that new recreation facilities, similar in character, could be established elsewhere in the Town.

In addition to the fundamental educational function of school facilities, the school campus offers multiple recreation and social resources that are important to the quality of life in Fabius. It is appropriate for Town and school officials to continue to work cooperatively to maintain and expand the cooperative use of existing facilities when this can be done.

Planning interests include the need to evaluate the environmental impacts of new or expanded recreation or education facilities on existing land uses in the immediate vicinity. Issues of noise and traffic on adjacent property and the effect of surface water

runoff on the natural environment are examples of potential impacts that should be considered.

#### **6. Mixed Development/Hamlet**

This land use category describes areas in the Town where relatively compact development concentrations have occurred and are desirable, including the Village of Fabius, the hamlet of Apulia Station and the smaller residential grouping at Apulia. Historically, development has clustered at intersections along the main road network (Routes 80 and 91) and at the railroad crossing in Apulia Station. While these development clusters are viewed primarily as residential settlements, Fabius Village and Apulia Station have strong historic and social identity as areas of mixed land use including housing and a variety of community services and small commercial and industrial businesses.

A variety of housing types including multiple-family dwellings, mixed small-scale, residential support services, small businesses and industries as well as civic and institutional functions could be appropriate future land uses in these development clusters. Extension of, and connection with the existing street system is desirable as an alternative to additional driveway entrances along the main highway system. The availability of an adequate water supply system and the ability to effectively dispose of domestic sewage will be the primary planning concern for continued development in these concentrated mixed-use areas. Commercial and light industrial activities will be appropriate land uses when this type of development is basically compatible with the neighborhood scale and residential character that currently exists in these areas. Maintaining optimum vehicular movement along major roads should be a consideration in the location and design of future development.

### **E. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

An important component of the comprehensive planning process is a review of traffic and the effectiveness of roads serving the daily needs of the community. The transportation system in Fabius consists of a traditional network of state, county and local roads and a single-track railroad located near the Town's western border. Figure 4 shows the configuration and components of the existing transportation system.

Two state routes serve the Town: Rt. 80 runs east-west and Rt. 91 runs north-south. These two routes occupy the same right-of-way between Apulia and the Village of Fabius. Both state routes are relatively narrow and have minimal shoulders. Both carry truck traffic and generally higher volumes than other roads in the Town.

Functional Classification of Highways. The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTTC) has developed a classification system to generally describe the varied functions of the county's highway system. Included are principal arterials with limited access, minor arterials, collectors and local roads.



Each of the road types has a specific function to perform in the traffic-movement system. The only function of "principal arterials" (Rts. 81, 490, 690, etc.), where access is limited and there are four or more lanes, wide shoulders and grade-separated intersection, is to efficiently move large volumes of traffic at high speeds. Heavy trucks prefer these routes and direct access to adjacent land is not permitted. "Minor arterials" (Rts. 20, Seneca Turnpike, etc.) also carry heavy volumes of traffic but access to roadside land is usually possible and most crossroads intersect at grade. "Collector" roads have the equal functions of carrying through traffic and providing access to abutting land. "Local" roads carry low to moderate amounts of traffic, often at lower speed, and direct access to roadside land is their primary function. County and state roads in the "collector" classification are usually called upon to carry moderate to high volumes of traffic, including trucks, at varying speeds, depending on location. Such roads also provide direct access to adjacent land which has been developed for one purpose or another.

Most state and county roads provide access to adjacent land. In the Town of Fabius, the two state highways (80 and 91) are classified as so called "collector" roads. In addition to the state highways, Apulia Road, Mill Street/Kenny Road and Oran Delphi/DeRuyter/West Lake Road, all county roads, are also included in SMTc's suggested collector road system. All other roads in the Town are classified as local. The more direct access that must be provided to roadside development by collector roads the less efficiently traffic is able to move on that collector.

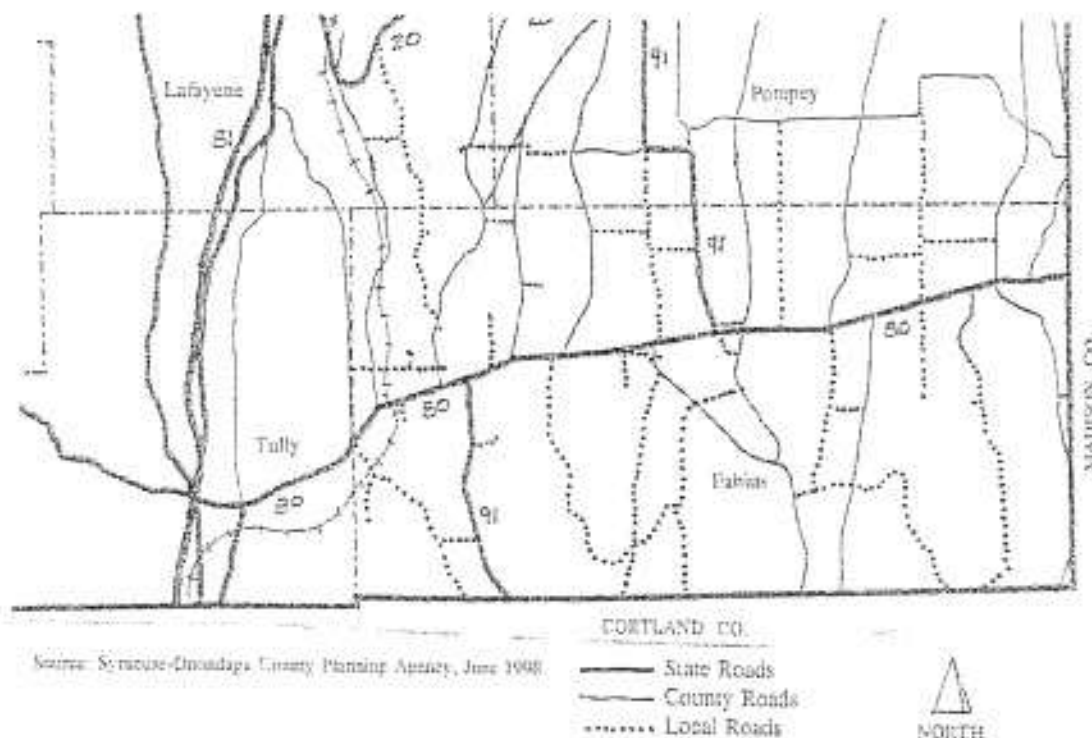
Local Driving Characteristics Census 2000 Summary File 3 indicates that there were 960 workers 16 years of age and older living in the Town of Fabius, 183 (19%) of which lived in the Village. Of those workers 859 (88%) reportedly worked at locations in Onondaga County, including 52 who reportedly worked at home. Although a detailed breakdown of job location was not obtained, it is reasonable to assume that a number of those workers worked locally, that is, in the Village or Town, and that a large percentage worked elsewhere, most likely somewhere in the Syracuse metropolitan area. The Census found that 92% of the Town's workers drove to their job sites in a car, truck or van and almost 90% drove alone. Only 2% walked to their place of employment.

It can be seen, therefore, that parts of the Fabius road network shown in Figure 4 are used extensively by the labor force and, as such, are a critical component of the local economy. In addition, the road network is constantly used to provide access to essential shopping and personal services, to schools and churches and for a myriad other purposes related to daily life in the community.

As the population grows in the future, even if such growth occurs gradually over an extended period of time, the additional development of single-family homes is likely to occur along the existing road system. This will lead to added traffic on many county and local roads and, most certainly, on State roads.



Figure 4: Existing road system - Town of Fabius.



#### Related Comments

- \* State Route 80 is a heavily traveled route in Fabius and the only continuous east-west route passing through the town. Travel lanes appear to be adequate for the traffic carried but vertical alignment could be improved and shoulders are very narrow and largely unpaved. Shoulders are not suitable for safe bicycle or pedestrian traffic.
- \* At some intersections between Rt.80 and the local road system sight distances are restricted due to the vertical alignment of the state road.
- \* North-south travel through the town is facilitated by several routes in addition to Rt.91 that make this movement possible.
- \* Steep topography and large areas of public land have combined to limit the extent of road building in the southern part of the Town.
- \* Most land subdivision to accommodate housing or other non-farm development has occurred along the established road network where road frontage is established. As more of this roadside development occurs along the more heavily traveled roads, the effectiveness of these roads as carriers of through traffic will most likely be reduced.

### Planning Issues

In the 2010 Development Guide for Onondaga County issued in 1998 by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, it is stated that the County's highway network "will not be expanded or dramatically enhanced in the foreseeable future; preservation of the existing system is essential. Decreasing federal and state funding for highways, restricted local resources, and increasing travel demand require optimum use of the existing network." During the time period of the Fabius comprehensive plan, therefore, little change in the existing road network can be expected.

There will continue to be funds committed for maintaining and upgrading the road system in Onondaga County and in Fabius, however, and some road improvements in Fabius might occur in this way. If improvements to State Routes 80 and 91 could be achieved in some way, the safety and efficiency of these roads could be improved. A wider, paved shoulder would improve the safety of those who chose to bicycle or walk along these roads. Wider shoulders would also provide for the safe pull-off of vehicles who have an emergency or some other reason to leave the roadway.

Improving vertical and horizontal alignments of State roads--which carry the heaviest volumes of traffic in Fabius--could improve efficiency and increase the safety of these roads. The intersection of Rt. 80/91 and Rawley-Jerome Rd. is an example of potentially hazardous conditions due to limited sight lines looking to the west.

The character of development adjacent to parts of the road system can have a significant impact on the ability of a road to fulfill its major function. In Fabius the need for efficient movement of relatively large volumes of traffic is limited to state routes 80 and 91. Efficiency of traffic movement on these routes can be significantly impeded when turning movements, especially left turns, must be made to gain access to adjacent land. Therefore, minimizing multiple individual driveways associated with strip residential development can help to maintain the traffic-carrying function of these state roads.

Zoning can sometimes be a useful tool to minimize the negative impact of development on highway efficiency and safety. Through zoning, the desired type and density of development can be established, requirements for frontage and building setbacks can be defined and site review criteria can be helpful in avoiding driveway locations with insufficient sight distances. When a multiple-lot development is proposed, subdivision regulations can be an effective way to preserve highway efficiency. These techniques are all useful in preserving the efficiency of the major road system.

## IV. FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION

It is apparent that the real value of community planning rests in the active use of the plan as a means of considering alternatives for growth and change. The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Fabius, presented in previous pages of this report, serves as notice of all the general physical and economic objectives toward which the Town will attempt to move. To realize the greatest value from the plan, steps should be taken to follow up on key policies and work toward achievement of its most important goals. The plan will be most effective if it can be used to guide future public and private decision-making about growth and change in the Town. This can be done, in part, by using the effective tools and techniques available to municipalities in New York State: zoning, site plan review and land subdivision regulations.

**1. Land Use Regulations.** If the planning process is to be effective, some level of regulation over the use of land for the general community good is essential. Fabius has realized this fundamental need for many years. A zoning ordinance for the Town was enacted in 1958 and, among other purposes, has been used "...for the protection and promotion of the public health, safety and welfare...". The initial ordinance was revised in 1975 and is currently applicable to town development. Based on the findings, conclusions and land use objectives of this Comprehensive Plan, revisions of the zoning regulations will be recommended.

**2. Site Plan Review.** This implementation measure provides the Town with the opportunity to consider specific development criteria that can be applied to the design and layout of a single parcel of land. While zoning specifies the general type of development or land use that is appropriate in the various districts, site plan review establishes minimum standards thought to be important to a specific development proposed for a specific location. Development of a commercial or industrial activity in a residential zone might be an example of the site plan review process. The developer would be required to comply with specific requirements for the site and building that would make the proposed development more compatible with the surrounding area.

Regulations and requirements for site plan review are often included as part of the zoning regulations. They can also be incorporated as an independent document. Review of proposals and enforcement of standards can be the responsibility of the legislative body, the planning board or the Zoning Board of Appeals.

**3. Subdivision Regulations.** A useful supplement to the zoning ordinance, which controls the way land is used, is the opportunity to review the design and layout of proposed development before land subdivision occurs. When an area of land is divided into lots for sale and development the subdivision review process provides an opportunity to consider any negative impacts that development might have. While this review process would not be extensive in Fabius it could be helpful in the consideration of such things as the location and design of driveways along major roadways.

Regulations can be written so that small subdivisions are exempt from the review process; the reviewing authority can be retained by the Town Board or delegated to the planning board. An opportunity for environmental impact review can be provided if the subdivision is large or located in an environmentally sensitive area.

**4. Comprehensive Plan Review and Update.** Any implementation measures enacted by the Town Board should realistically reflect the amount and nature of anticipated development in the Town. Since the Comprehensive Plan anticipates relatively modest growth in Fabius over the next ten to fifteen years the regulations adopted to implement the plan should reflect this level of development and be no more complicated than necessary to accomplish planning goals. Ideally, the plan would be reviewed every five to ten years and updated or modified as necessary. Measures used to implement the plan should also be made as appropriate to reflect existing conditions and the current objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

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